

WILDERNESS CHARACTERISTICS REVIEW

Dates of Submissions: *December 14, 2001; December 30, 2003*

Date(s) of Field Office Review: *July-August, October, 2002; December, 2006-January, 2007*

Submitter: *SUWA*

Name of Area to be Reviewed: *Hells Hole*

BLM Field Office(s) Affected: *Moab, Vernal, Meeker, Grand Junction*

EVALUATION

1.) Was new information submitted by a member of the public for this area?

YES X . NO .

2.) If new information was submitted, describe the submission. For example, did the submission include a map that identifies the specific boundaries of the area(s) in question; a narrative that describes the wilderness characteristics of the area and documents how that information differs from the information gathered and reviewed in prior BLM inventories; photographic documentation; etc?

Moab BLM first received new information from SUWA on December 14, 2001, which included maps, photos and a narrative. On December 30, 2003, BLM received a letter with the name of the proposed unit, and reference to America's Redrock Wilderness Act, proposed in Congress. No other information was presented; SUWA's submission said that specific information, including maps, photographs and analysis would be forthcoming. To date, Moab BLM has not received any of this information. A GIS-based map of the proposed unit was submitted to Utah BLM SO, and provides the basis for the area reviewed. The northern portion of the unit is within the Vernal FO planning area, and will not be reviewed here,

3. As a result of interdisciplinary review of relevant information (which may include aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.), do you conclude:

 a) the decision reached in previous BLM inventories that the area lacks wilderness characteristics is still valid.

(or)

X b) some or all of the area has wilderness characteristics as shown on the attached map.

4. Describe your findings regarding specific wilderness characteristics and provide detailed rationale.

To evaluate SUWA's new information of December, 2001, BLM staff from the four affected field offices undertook several field trips to the proposed unit. Moab Field Office staff visited the southern portions of the unit on July 26, 2002. Staff from the Moab, Grand Junction, and Meeker Field Offices visited the entire unit on a joint overnight trip on August 7-8, 2002. BLM staff from the Vernal Field Office had visited the northeast portion of the unit on earlier in 2002. These trips resulted in detailed field maps, photo logs and 72 photos. Additionally, all cherry-stems and travel routes were visited and evaluated. Several hikes were undertaken, primarily to evaluate whether outstanding opportunities existed for solitude and/or primitive and unconfined recreation. Based on the above, Moab BLM signed a "Reasonable Probability Determination" on October 25, 2002, affirming that an area involving more than one field office and totaling at least 5,000 acres in SUWA's proposal was natural in character and possessing outstanding opportunities for solitude and primitive and unconfined recreation. In late 2006 and early 2007, the interdisciplinary team reviewed and refined the original RPD in order to produce a more refined mapping of lands found to possess wilderness characteristics. The size criterion, however, was contingent upon the concurrence of at least one of the three adjoining Field Offices, as the Moab FO portion, considered alone, was not large enough. The Vernal Field Office found that 2709 acres of the Hells Hole unit within their jurisdiction, and adjoining the Moab FO area, possessed wilderness characteristics, resulting in a unit that meets the size criterion of at least 5000 acres.

5. Document all information considered during the interdisciplinary team review (e.g. aerial photographs, state and county road information, road maintenance agreements, documentation from prior BLM inventories, field observations, maps, master title plats, evidence presented as new information by a proponent, etc.)

The following specific documents and files were utilized during the interdisciplinary review:

1. *Grand County road inventory (GIS)*
2. *Grand County intrusion data (GIS)*
3. *Prairie Canyon range allotment file*
4. *2006 NAIP aerial photos (GIS)*
5. *Vegetative treatments (local GIS)*
6. *Range improvements (local GIS)*
7. *Hells Hole Field Inventory file*
8. *Hells Hole RPD*

6. List the members of the interdisciplinary team and resource specialties represented.

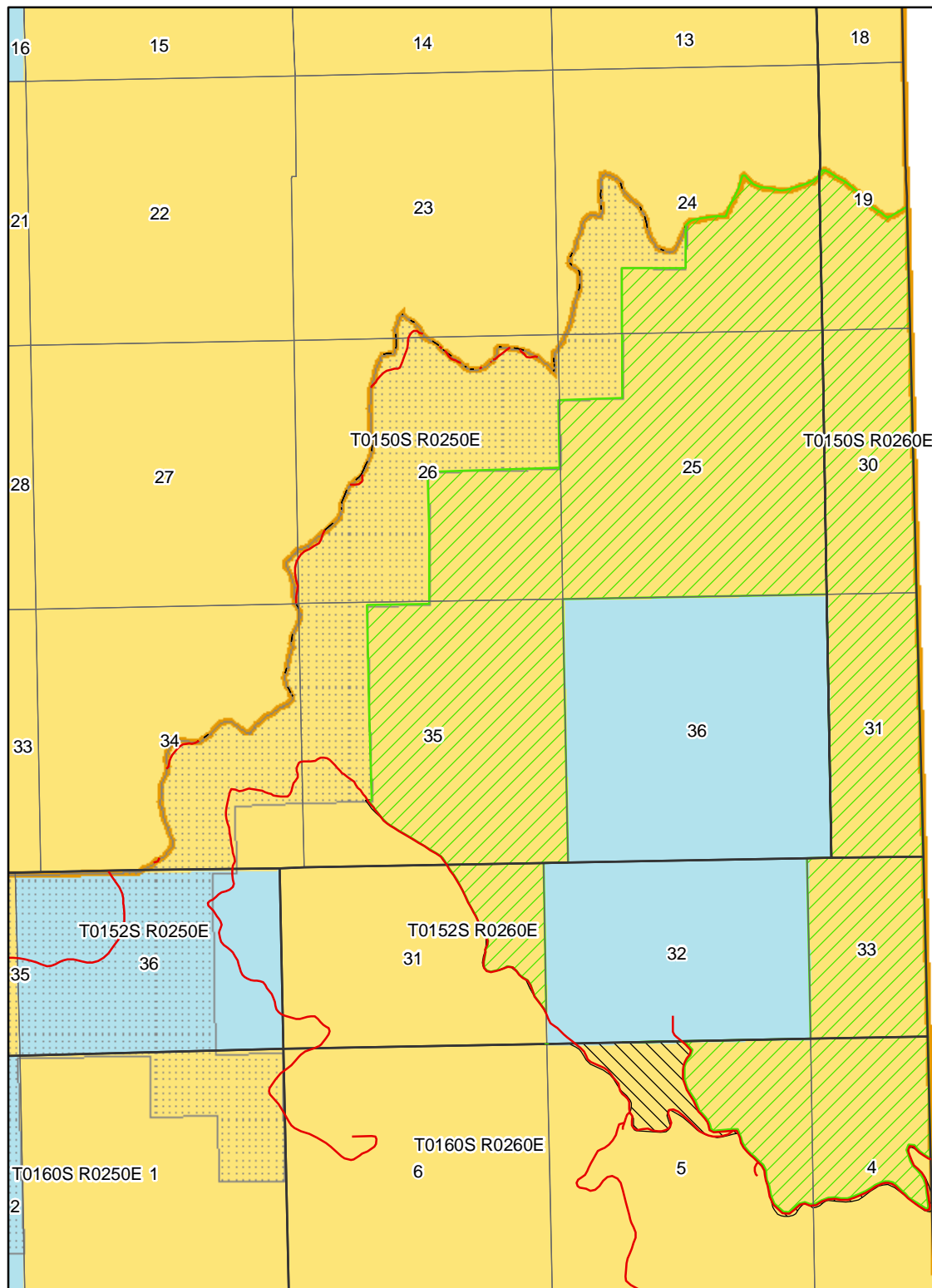
<i>Name</i>	<i>Resource(s) Represented</i>
<i>Bill Stevens</i>	<i>Wilderness, GIS, Recreation</i>
<i>Ann Marie Aubry</i>	<i>Hydrology, Soils</i>
<i>Brent Northrup</i>	<i>Minerals, RMP Team Lead</i>
<i>Chad Niehaus</i>	<i>Recreation</i>
<i>Daryl Trotter</i>	<i>Botany, NEPA coordinator</i>
<i>Donna Turnipseed</i>	<i>Cultural, Paleontology</i>
<i>Katie Stevens</i>	<i>Recreation, Planning</i>
<i>Lynn Jackson</i>	<i>Geology, Minerals, Associate FO Manager</i>
<i>Pam Riddle</i>	<i>Wildlife</i>
<i>David Williams</i>	<i>Range</i>
<i>Maggie Wyatt</i>	<i>Field Office Manager</i>

Field Office Manager /s/ Maggie Wyatt

Date 3/29/07

This determination is part of an interim step in BLM's internal decision-making process and does not constitute a decision that can be appealed.

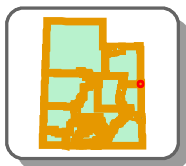
Hells Hole WCR Review



1:38,410

Legend

- Grand Co Identified Routes
- Bureau of Land Management (BLM)
- National Park Service (NPS)
- State
- Private
- US Forest Service (USFS)
- Indian Reservation (IR)
- VernalAdmin
- Field Office Boundary
- NWC
- WC



United States Department of the Interior
Bureau of Land Management
Moab Field Office
Map created on Feb 22, 2007

0 0.1 0.2 0.3 0.4
Miles



CAUTION:
Land ownership data is derived from less accurate data than the 1:24000 scale base map. Therefore, land ownership may not be shown for parcels smaller than 40 acres, and land ownership lines may have plotting errors due to source data.

No warranty is made by the Bureau of Land Management for the use of the data for purposes not intended by the BLM.